

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (presently amended) A vehicle accessory mounting assembly comprising:

a running board structure, said structure comprising a generally planar upper surface, a plurality of reinforcing ribs on a bottom side thereof, and at least one mounting bracket receiving slot;

a mounting bracket, said bracket being partially received in said receiving slot, said mounting bracket attaching to a vehicle;

a means of non-releasably securing said structure to said bracket, said means comprising at least one deflectable tab on said mounting bracket received by a corresponding aperture in said running board when said mounting bracket is received in said receiving slot of said running board.

2. (cancelled)

3. (presently amended) The vehicle accessory mounting assembly of Claim 1, wherein said means of securing said running board to said bracket comprises at least one deflectable tab on said mounting bracket received by a first complementary

aperture in said running board and a integral, stationary locking post on said mounting bracket received by a second complementary aperture in said running board when said mounting bracket is received in said receiving zone of said running board.

4. (presently amended) The vehicle accessory mounting assembly of Claim 1, wherein said means of securing said running board to said bracket comprising ~~solely~~ of one deflectable tab on said mounting bracket received by a corresponding aperture in said running board when said mounting bracket is received in said receiving zone of said running board.

5. (presently amended) The vehicle accessory mounting assembly of Claim 1, wherein said means of securing said running board to said bracket comprising ~~solely~~ of one integral, stationary locking post on said running board proximal said receiving zone, being received in a corresponding aperture in said mounting bracket when said mounting bracket is received in said receiving zone of said running board.

6. (presently amended) The vehicle accessory mounting assembly of Claim 1, wherein said means of securing said running board to said bracket comprising solely of one deflectable tab on said mounting bracket received by a first complementary aperture in said running board and a integral, stationary locking post on said mounting bracket received by a second complementary aperture in said running board when said mounting bracket is received in said receiving zone of said running board.

7. (presently amended) The vehicle accessory mounting assembly of Claim 1, wherein said mounting bracket ~~embodies the sole attachment~~ is the only means of attaching said bracket to said vehicle.

8. (cancelled)

9. (presently amended) A method of non-releasably attaching the vehicle accessory mounting assembly of claim 1 to a vehicle comprising the steps of:

- attaching said mounting bracket to said vehicle;
- positioning said running board structure adjacent said mounting bracket, aligning said mounting bracket with said mounting bracket receiving zone;
- pushing said running board structure towards said mounting bracket, said mounting bracket being received in said mounting bracket receiving zone, said deflectable tab biasing while contacting the running board structure adjacent said receiving zone;
- fully inserting said running board structure onto said mounting bracket, said deflectable tab being received by said aperture in said running board, said aperture preventing the removal of said deflectable tab.

10. (presently amended) A vehicle accessory mounting assembly comprising:

- a vehicle;

an accessory, ~~such as a running board~~, said accessory comprising at least one mounting bracket receiving slot;

a mounting bracket, said bracket being partially received in said ~~receiving zone~~ mounting bracket receiving slot, having an accessory attachment means communicating with said accessory for securing said bracket to said accessory, and a bracket mounting means communicating with said vehicle for securing said bracket to said vehicle;

said accessory attachment means integrated into said mounting bracket to securingly communicate with a corresponding accessory attachment means receiving element, integrated into said accessory, said accessory attachment means embodying the sole means of securing said accessory structure to said mounting bracket;

said bracket mounting means integrated into said mounting bracket to securingly communicate with a corresponding bracket mounting means receiving element integrated into vehicle, said mounting means embodying the sole means of securing said mounting bracket to said vehicle.

11. (presently amended) A vehicle accessory mounting assembly comprising:

a vehicle accessory with a mounting bracket receiving zone;

a mounting bracket with an accessory mounting zone and a vehicle mounting zone;

a non-releasable means of securing said accessory to said mounting bracket, said means comprising of deflectable protrusions integral with either the accessory or mounting bracket that locate into corresponding apertures in either the accessory or mounting bracket;

a means of securing said mounting bracket to a vehicle, said means comprising of deflectable protrusions integral with the mounting bracket or with integral fastening apertures that securely locate said bracket to said vehicle either with or without discrete fasteners.